

**Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes
July 11, 2012**

In Attendance:

Dave Colteryahn, chair
Greg LoBuono, vice chair
Veronica Craig, recording secretary
Brian Deroo
Becky Montag
Ben Strickler, Parks and Recreation Representative

Meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by co-vice chair Greg LoBuono.

Minutes: Minutes for the June meeting were approved with no corrections.

Standing Business

Correspondence: Veronica contacted the Williamsburg Way resident who had spoken with the EC at the Home Expo about his large pin oak. He feels that it might become the new Big Tree record holder for that species. This week he and Veronica measured the tree, and it may be a new winner. Veronica e-mailed Karen Fields, former EC chair, and asked for assistance with details.

Ben included a copy of Jim Bell's EAB management update in the meeting packet confirming that EAB infestation has been verified in Fairfield.

Wendi sent Ben details for an upcoming Tree Commission Academy to be held in Milford, this time in the evening rather than on the weekend.

Articles: Dave shared a web article about the Asian long-horned beetle infestation, and Veronica found an excellent photo of this menacing insect.

EC Activity Hours: Greg L/3.5, Dave/1, Becky/.5, Brian/.5, Veronica/8.5.

Adopt-a-Roadway: A sign-up sheet for July through next April was circulated.

Parks Board Report

Ben reported for Bob Breen, who was out of town. There were many issues to catch up on at the last meeting. The Board will be conducting interviews for various open seats. The EC, even with its two new members, still has one opening.

The Opening Day Ceremony for the Field of Dreams will be held on July 28, 2012. EC vice-chair Greg LoBuono attended the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

The Board is planning on a fall dedication of the Huffman Property Project.

Parks Department Report

Website Update: The new format includes a pie graph contrasting new and returning visitors.

Recycling Presentation Plans: The EC's September 5th meeting is the planned date for this presentation. Dave Butsch will be invited to highlight Fairfield's new contract with Rumpke. Anne Fieher Flaig will discuss recycling in Butler County.

EAB Removal Grant: The City is waiting for final confirmation. The plan is to concentrate on Woodridge Boulevard, and to remove infested, hazardous trees. This approach, a cycle of removals and replacements, will fit in well with the budget. Upon removal, the material will be put in a holding area by the sewage plant. Once a year, it will be finely ground and taken away by a contracted company. The cost of this project will be \$20,000. \$10,000 will come from the state grant, and the City must match this with an additional \$10,000.

Commission members discussed the confusion over who is responsible for maintaining trees on our city's right-of-way, a.k.a. "street trees." Many homeowners are unsure of what to do when one of these trees dies. Do they cut it down? Does the City take care of it? Must the homeowner have the City's permission before removing a dead street tree? Does the tree have to be replaced, and what species should it be? Who pays for this? Now that the EAB has been confirmed in Fairfield, these questions take on a new urgency.

Discussion followed, with the EC all agreeing that residents will need answers and guidelines. An article in the Flyer was recommended. Brian suggested a step-by-step approach to residential ash borer management: 1) Identifying the tree's species 2) Establishing ownership and responsibility 3) The maintenance, treatment, or removal of ash trees 4) Proper disposal.

Miscellaneous: The Lane Public Library has asked the EC to identify the trees that are planted at their Fairfield Branch (Village Green). This will be for their own use, however the EC would like to include locations, photos and descriptions of the trees. Ben will e-mail Dave with the library's correspondence.

Ben will be submitting a mid-year report to Butler County Recycling and Solid Waste District, updating them on Fairfield's use of the Big Belly trash management system. This will free up the rest of the Big Belly grant money.

Ben distributed the new, revised City Ethics Policy. He asked EC members to read it carefully and contact him if there were any questions.

Commissioner Reports

New Goals: The EC read through the Growth Award Criteria and discussed new goals in the various categories. Many suggestions were made, including enhancing community tree awareness through the identification and description of the library trees in Village Green, the continued use of the Flyer to provide residents with EAB information and updates, and using community events as a venue to update the public.

The EC will continue to partnerships with both individuals and businesses to promote recycling and to encourage residents to view recycling opportunities as a positive way to help our community, not as a nuisance.

Other Business

Next Month's Meeting: Due to vacations, the EC voted to cancel the August 1, 2012 meeting. The next meeting will be September 5.

Calendar:

Parks Board Meeting – August 14, 2012 at 5:30 pm, CAC

Field of Dreams Opening Ceremony – July 28

EC Meeting – September 5, 2012 at 6:00 pm, CAC

Adjournment: at 7:23 pm.